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Session

Laurent GAZULL - Green energy and rural development in developing countries: a marriage attempt which is falling apart

Session4218 Rural agency in the 'Green Economy' II: Rural energy futures

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Duration15 minutes

Production of green energy is a pillar of green economy. Governments and development agencies of developing countries have promoted it. The main associated goals are, in theory, to: (1) switch from coal and oil production to biomass production; (2) provide local power in off-grid areas, create employment and associate local value with the creation of local biomass supply chain; and (3) decrease the pressure on the natural vegetation stands. These three green principles were theoretically virtuous and based on pro-rural development (increasing power artisanal production and local use of this power) and on sustainable management of the environment. However, from a short historical perspective, the green energy investments demonstrated several adverse effects: 1) the capitals allotted to green energy operators have been quickly concentrated on big energy production units generally leant to agro-industrial stakeholders in the sectors of sugar cane, palm oil or industrial wood; 2) capitalistic positions have been reinforced to the detriment of rural development. Indeed, smallholders were involved in power generation as raw materials' suppliers, but they were left over from any better access to energy; 3) the demand of the big units for biomass is such that it is likely to destabilize the local biomass value chains handled by smallholders; 4) green energy production didn't change the way to produce biomass and didn't alleviate environmental impacts. Hence, behind the virtuous rural-development-based discourse at the political level, the green energy is up to now hold by huge capitalistic units having no consideration for smallholders and for the environment.

Presenters

Presenter

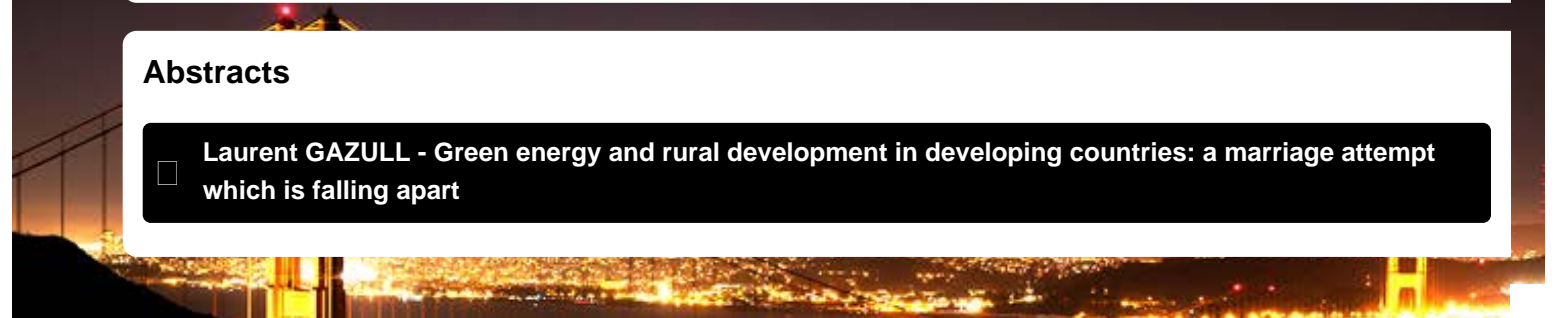
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Abstracts

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